

# Choosing GCSEs

This page helps you to consider your choices beyond year 9 and tells you how to find out more about the GCSE or equivalent qualifications you may need for various careers in health.

## GCSEs and other choices

In year 9 you will have to make some important decisions about what to study over the next couple of years. You will have to continue with some subjects such as maths, English and science but you will have some choice for the others.

Most schools teach GCSEs (these are well known qualifications at levels 1 and 2), but some schools offer equivalent qualifications, such as IGCSEs. In addition to GCSEs, you may be able to take one or more vocational courses at levels 1 or 2, such as a BTEC or (OCR) Oxford, Cambridge and RSA qualification in Health and Social Care. This may appeal to you if you prefer more practical learning and assessment. Note that not all schools are able to offer all subjects or all types of courses.



You may be able to take one or more vocational courses at levels 1 or 2 in health and social care.

## How to make your decisions

- firstly, find out which courses and subjects are available at your school
- if you are interested in a subject, ask your teachers what it will involve
- think about which subjects you enjoy at the moment and whether you are likely to do well in them in the future
- if you already have a career in health in mind, use [Explore by roles](#) <sup>[1]</sup> to find out which GCSEs or other qualifications will be useful or necessary to start a job or training. For instance, for some health jobs, you need a strong background in science, so you may need more than single science GCSE. [You can also get some bite-size information by comparing the roles in health](#) <sup>[2]</sup>
- if you need general information about your options after year 9, find out what careers advice is available through your school. [You can also find helpful information through the National Careers Service](#) <sup>[3]</sup>

If you're still unsure what you want to do, taking a broad range of subjects will usually help to keep your options open. Remember that getting good grades in English, maths and science will always help you in the future.

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**Source URL:** <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/study-and-training/secondary-school-or-fe-college/choosing-gcses>

### Links

[1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles>

[2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/compare-roles>

[3] <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/pages/home.aspx>